

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY NEA:AR DAY:TH

APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY

NEA:ALATHERTON, JR.

P:JJSISCO

S/S -O: A. OTTO

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TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

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FOR AMBASSADOR FROM THE SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:PFOR, LE, SY, US

SUBJECT: LEBANON

1. YOU SHOULD CONVEY THE FOLLOWING FROM THE SECRETARY TO ASAD.

2. THE SECRETARY WANTS TO KEEP PRESIDENT ASAD UP TO DATE ON AMBASSADOR BROWN'S ACTIVITIES IN LEBANON IN THE INTERESTS OF CLOSE COORDINATION BETWEEN OURSELVES AND THE SYRIAN POLITICAL EFFORT IN THAT COUNTRY. AS PRESIDENT ASAD KNOWS FROM OUR LAST MESSAGE, AMBASSADOR BROWN HAD PLANNED TO DISCUSS SECURITY AND POLITICAL ASPECTS OF THE SITUATION WITH MARONITE LEADERS ON MONDAY. HE DID SO, AND HAS REPORTED TO US ON THIS MEETING.

3. AMBASSADOR BROWN TALKED WITH FRANGIE, GEMAYEL, CHAMOUN AND A NUMBER OF OTHERS. DURING THE DISCUSSIONS

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HE RAISED WITH THEM, AS WE INFORMED ASAD HE INTENDED TO

DO, HIS PERSONAL THOUGHTS ABOUT THE PROBLEM OF INTRODUCING SOME IMMEDIATE SECURITY INTO BEIRUT AND THE LONGER-RANGE PROBLEM OF REBUILDING LEBANESE SECURITY FORCES. FOR THE SHORT RUN PROBLEM HE PUT FORWARD AS HIS PERSONAL SUGGESTION THE IDEA OF A JOINT FORCE WITH CHRISTIANS, PALESTINIANS, SAIQA AND ARMY ELEMENTS. FOR THE LONGER

RUN, HE SUGGESTED, ALSO PERSONALLY, AN INTERNATIONAL CONSORTIUM TO BE REQUESTED BY THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT, THAT WOULD HELP WITH REBUILDING THE LEBANESE ECONOMY AND ALSO CONTRIBUTE TO THE REESTABLISHMENT OF LEBANESE SECURITY FORCES. HE PUT FORWARD THESE IDEAS IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR FUNDAMENTAL AIM OF SUPPORTING THE SYRIAN POLITICAL EFFORTS IN LEBANON, EMPHASIZING HE WAS NOT REPEAT NOT MAKING ANY OFFICIAL U.S. PROPOSALS. HE ALSO EMPHASIZED STRONGLY THE NEED FOR GETTING AHEAD WITH THE IMMEDIATE POLITICAL PROCESS. IN ADDITION, HE MADE IT PLAIN THAT THE U.S. IS DEEPLY CONCERNED BY THE SITUATION OF THE MARONITES AND BY THEIR MILITARY DIS-ADVANTAGE. IN THIS RESPECT HE SAID THAT THE ANSWER FOR THE CHRISTIANS WAS IN CARRYING THROUGH AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE THE GENERALLY AGREED-UPON POLITICAL PLAN.

4. GEMAYEL, AMBASSADOR BROWN REPORTS, EXPRESSED HIMSELF AS ENTIRELY WILLING TO CONTRIBUTE THE PHALANGE TO A JOINT SECURITY FORCE, SAYING THIS COULD BE DONE WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE SYRIAN-PALESTINIAN-LEBANESE COMMISSION ARRANGEMENT. HE ALSO APPROVED STRONGLY OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONSORTIUM IDEA PROVIDED IT WAS A LEBANESE INITIATIVE. HE BELIEVED IT SHOULD INCLUDE FORCES OF OTHER COUNTRIES AND EMPHASIZED THAT SYRIA WOULD HAVE TO BE INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS THROUGHOUT.

5. FRANGIE WAS ALSO WILLING FOR MARONITE FORCES TO TAKE PART IN A JOINT FORCE, THOUGH HE WAS LESS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE FEASIBILITY OF SUCH A FORCE. HE AGREED THAT IT WAS VITAL TO PUT AN END TO THE DISORDERS IN BEIRUT. HE AGREED COMPLETELY THAT THE CONSORTIUM IDEA COULD SERVE AS A SIGN OF HOPE FOR THE PEOPLE SINCE IT WOULD DEMONSTRATE THAT THE NEW TASK WAS RECONSTRUCTION AND
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THAT THE WORLD WAS HELPING. FRANGIE STRESSED HIS TRUST AND CONFIDENCE IN PRESIDENT ASAD.

6. CHAMOUN, ON THE OTHER HAND, DID NOT REACT FAVORABLY TO THE IDEAS THAT BROWN PUT FORWARD AS HIS PRIVATE THOUGHTS. HE TENDED TO FEEL THAT THEY WERE ONLY OF SHORT TERM UTILITY AND THAT THEY WOULD LEAD TO WAR IN ANOTHER FEW YEARS.

7. THE SECRETARY PARTICULARLY WISHES TO ASSURE PRESIDENT ASAD THAT NOT ONLY WERE BROWN'S IDEAS PUT FORWARD AS HIS PERSONAL THOUGHTS AT THIS STAGE, BUT WE WILL NOT PURSUE THEM OFFICIALLY WITH THE LEBANESE UNTIL AND UNLESS WE ARE CERTAIN THAT PRESIDENT ASAD IS AWARE OF WHAT WE ARE DOING AND HAS NOT INDICATED THAT THIS WOULD INTERFERE WITH SYRIAN EFFORTS. THE SECRETARY ALSO WANTS TO MAKE

ABSOLUTELY CLEAR THAT BROWN HAS EMPHASIZED IN ALL OF HIS TALKS THAT WE CONSIDER OURSELVES AS SUPPORTING THE SYRIAN EFFORTS AND THAT WE CONSIDER THE SYRIANS TO BE WORKING IN A CONSTRUCTIVE WAY TO RESOLVE THE LEBANESE PROBLEM. BROWN HAS TAKEN EVERY OCCASION TO PRAISE PRESIDENT ASAD'S HANDLING OF THE SITUATION.

8. THE SECRETARY HOPES THAT IT WILL BE POSSIBLE FOR PRESIDENT ASAD TO LET US KNOW HIS ASSESSMENT OF THE DEVELOPING LEBANESE SITUATION AND HIS PLANS FOR MEETING THE PROBLEMS OF A SECURITY AND POLITICAL NATURE. WE BELIEVE THAT, WORKING THROUGH AMBASSADOR BROWN, WE CAN MAKE AN IMPORTANT SUPPORTING CONTRIBUTION, BUT WE CAN BE MUCH MORE USEFUL IN THIS TO THE EXTENT WE UNDERSTAND AND CAN COORDINATE WITH THE SYRIAN EFFORT.

9. FINALLY, THE SECRETARY NOTES THAT AMBASSADOR BROWN WILL BE CONTINUING HIS TALKS WITH ALL OF THE MAIN LEBANESE FACTIONS, INCLUDING JUMBLATT, AND HE WANTS TO REAFFIRM TO PRESIDENT ASAD THAT ALL OF THESE EFFORTS HAVE ONLY ONE INTENTION, NAMELY TO SUPPORT THE SYRIAN ENDEAVORS TO WORK OUT A POLITICAL SOLUTION. IT IS LIKELY THAT IN SUCH A FLUID AND CONTENTIOUS SITUATION, PRESIDENT ASAD MAY HEAR REPORTS WHICH ARE DESIGNED TO
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PUT AMERICAN ACTIVITIES IN A DIFFERENT LIGHT. WE BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT THE SUPPORTING NATURE OF OUR ACTIVITIES WILL BE SO CLEAR FROM OUR PUBLIC STATEMENTS TO DATE, AND FROM THE RELIABLE ACCOUNTS THE SYRIANS WILL HAVE CONCERNING AMBASSADOR BROWN'S ACTIVITIES, THAT ANY MISCHIEVOUS RUMORS WILL APPEAR CLEARLY TO BE THE DISTORTIONS THAT THEY ARE. KISSINGER

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